



The President's Daily Brief

May 28, 1976

2



~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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25X1

Table of Contents

25X1

Egypt:

[Redacted]
[Redacted] (Page 1)

25X1

Lebanon: The critical meeting between President Sarkis and left-ist leader Kamal Jumblatt has been postponed again. (Page 1)

Notes: Cuba; Rhodesia; Mozambique-USSR; Egypt-Libya; Syria-UN-Israel (Pages 2 and 3)

25X1

At Annex we present

[Redacted] the military capabilities of the opposing forces in the Rhodesian insurgency.

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EGYPT:

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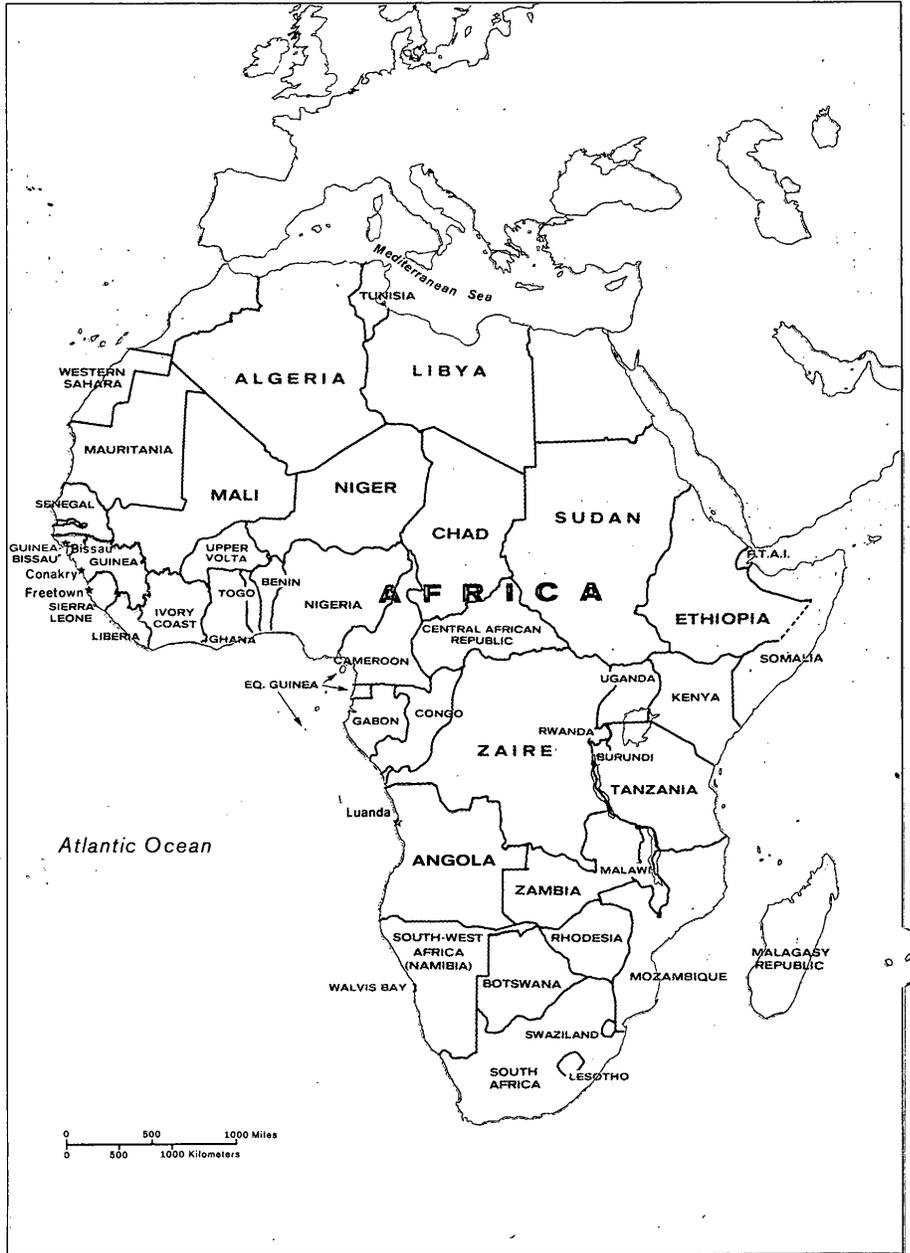
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LEBANON: *The murder yesterday of Kamal Jumblatt's sister by unidentified gunmen at her home in Beirut has caused another postponement of the critical meeting between the leftist leader and President-elect Sarkis.*

It is unclear what effect the killing will have on Sarkis' mediation efforts. Jumblatt himself has issued an appeal to his followers not to seek revenge.

Despite some sharp exchanges of artillery fire, the undeclared truce generally appears to be holding, and both Jumblatt and Christian Phalangist leaders recently have made conciliatory gestures, raising hopes that the roundtable discussions being promoted by Sarkis will come off.

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559841 5-76

NOTES

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Cuba appears to be getting ready to open regularly scheduled air service between Havana and several points in Africa.



The Cubans want to begin flights this summer. The most likely landing points are Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Angola.

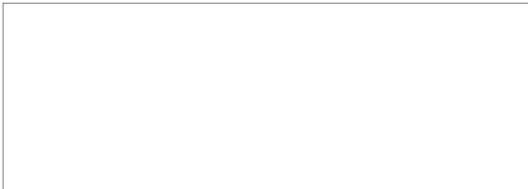
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Rhodesian security forces recently killed two guerrillas about 65 kilometers (40 miles) northeast of Salisbury.

This is the first such incident so close to the capital since the fighting picked up last January. The incident may be part of an effort by the insurgents to demoralize the white community. A popular white resort near the scene of the clash has closed because of the "security situation."

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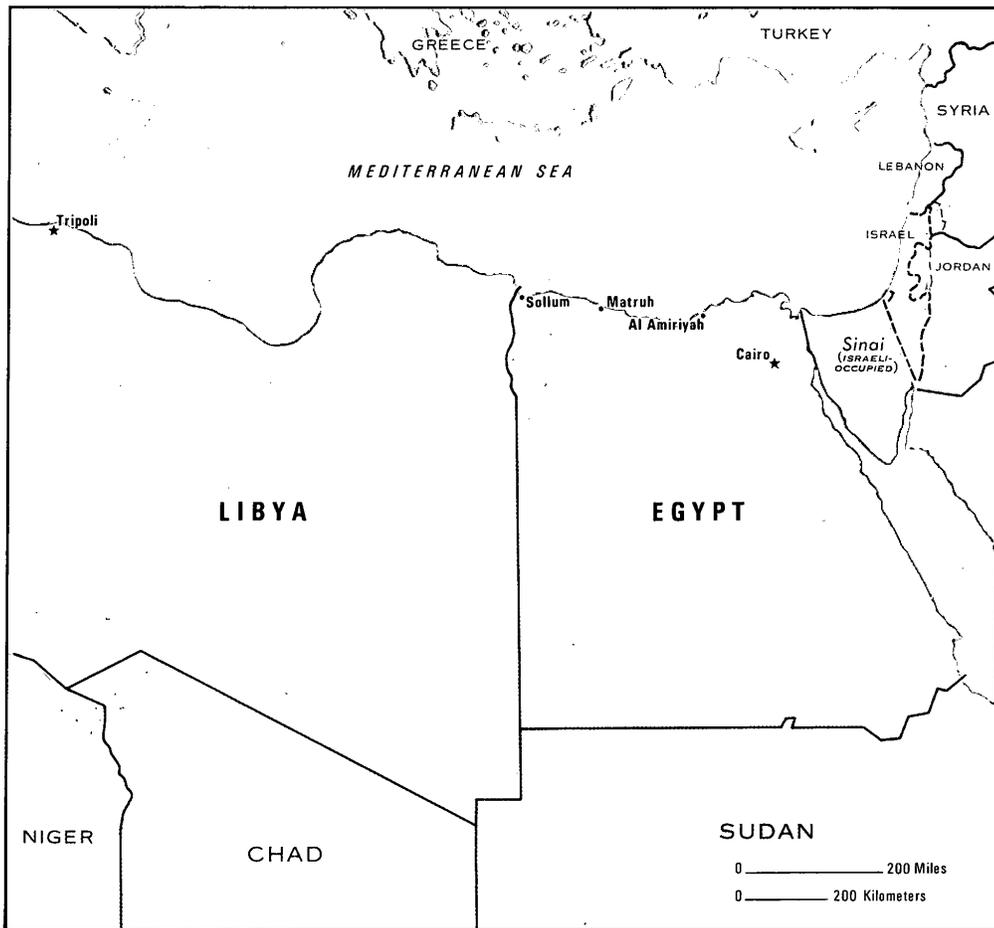


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Mozambique President Machel's visit to the USSR produced little immediate support for his country's ailing economy.

The President signed contracts for medical aid, technical services, and surveys but these come under a \$10-million credit extended early in 1975. Moscow may provide additional credits, but the Soviet pledge so far represents less than 5 percent of the total world assistance (\$250 million) committed to Mozambique since independence in 1975.

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559838 5-76

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Egypt is again increasing its military readiness along the Libyan border.

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[redacted] the naval observation post at Sollum was placed on alert on May 25, and a MIG-21 fighter squadron of 13 planes was deployed from an airfield east of Cairo to Matruh. Egypt had increased its military readiness along the Libyan border in mid-March when relations between the countries were tense. We do not know what has prompted the current increased readiness.

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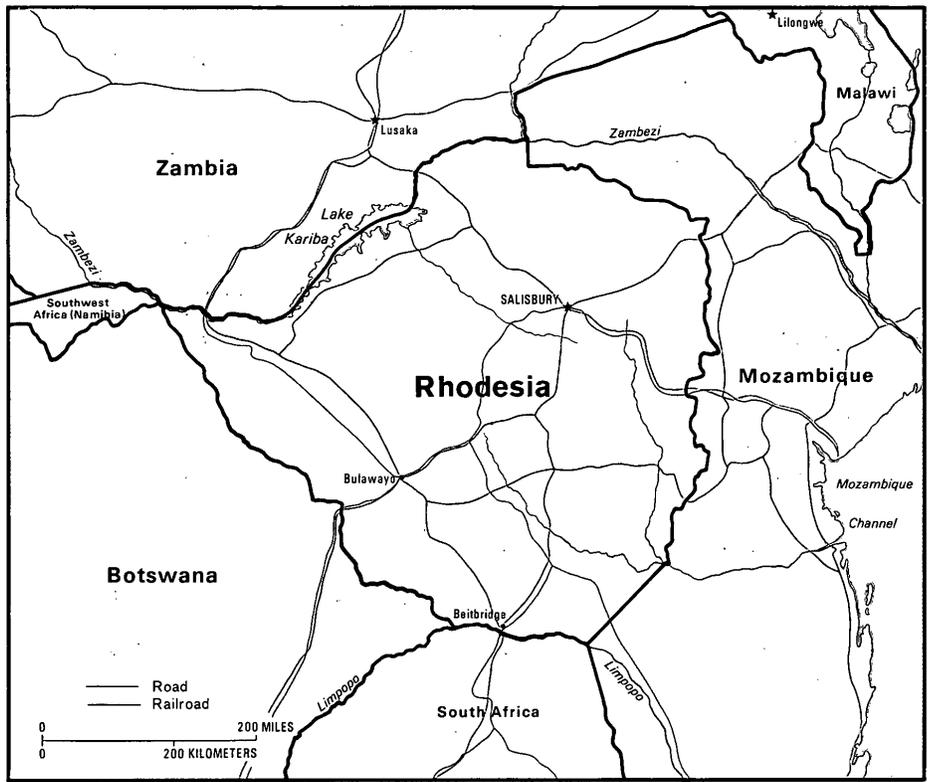
Syria, in return for its agreement to another six-month extension of the mandate for the UN observer force on the Golan Heights, reportedly has asked that the forthcoming Council resolution omit any reference to the 1974 Syrian-Israeli disengagement agreement.

Damascus presumably wants to avoid any indirect endorsement of step-by-step negotiations and underscore its contention that the UN force will remain on Syrian territory at Syria's sufferance, not as a result of any prior legal commitments.

President Asad's willingness to renew the mandate in return only for a visit from UN Secretary General Waldheim suggests that his freedom to make foreign policy is not now significantly restricted by extremists within the ruling Baath Party.

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559836 5-76

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RHODESIA: INSURGENCY AND COUNTERINSURGENCY
CAPABILITIES

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We present below [redacted]

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[redacted] the military capabilities of the opposing forces in the Rhodesian insurgency. It should be noted, however, that non-military factors--political, economic, psychological, as well as external--will be critical to the outcome, and that the insurgents include these factors in their considerations.

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Although rivalries within the insurgent leadership have served (and will continue) to hinder effective action, the Rhodesian insurgents' military capabilities have increased over the past year.

--They are better armed and trained than ever before.

--Over the past year, the size of the combat ready insurgent force has doubled to about 3,500 men out of an estimated total of 11,500 insurgents.

--The availability of sanctuary and base areas in Mozambique since late 1975 and increased external logistical assistance have improved insurgent infiltration and operational capabilities.

--Tanzanian and Mozambican military forces are playing an increasing role in support of the insurgency.

Although insurgent capabilities will almost certainly continue to improve, the insurgents are likely to achieve only limited military successes over the next year or so unless they receive extensive foreign combat assistance.

Rhodesian security forces are well trained and equipped, and they are enhancing their counterinsurgency capability.

--Rhodesia will continue to mount cross-border, hot pursuit raids into Mozambique, at least until insurgent border security and air defense capabilities improve.

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--Rhodesia will have to rely increasingly on blacks and white mercenary personnel.

--Thus far there have been no signs of disloyalty among the black security forces, but if the Rhodesian military situation deteriorates, some blacks could begin to reconsider their position.

--Rhodesian security forces will continue to depend on outside sources for military equipment, POL, spare parts, and ammunition as well as on the continued movement of such supplies through South Africa.

The level of insurgent activity will probably increase, and more sophisticated equipment, particularly air defense equipment in Mozambique, is likely to be used.

--Rhodesian security forces can probably cope with the anticipated increases in insurgent activities over the next year or so. But a significant spread of insurgency beyond the present concentrations in the border areas or a substantial and sustained increase in guerrilla activity would severely strain the army's limited capabilities.

--Infiltration into Rhodesia from Zambia and Botswana would even further disperse Rhodesia's limited manpower and stretch its limited logistical system.

--Sophisticated air defense equipment in the border area would take its toll on Rhodesia's slow flying, subsonic aircraft.

--Rhodesian security forces would be no match for a large conventional military force with sophisticated ground equipment and air support.

A2

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